



- P000 Basic Information
- P010 General Standards

P011 Payment

Summary P011 describes proper payment of postage by the mailer. It also covers mailable matter in or on private mail receptacles, collection of postage due, and revenue deficiencies for general and nonprofit Standard Mail.

1.0 PREPAYMENT AND POSTAGE DUE

Prepayment Conditions The mailer is responsible for proper payment of postage. Postage on all mail must be fully prepaid at the time of mailing, except as specifically provided by standard for:

1.1

- a. Business reply mail (see [S922](#)) and metered reply mail (see [P030](#)) handled as business reply mail.
- b. Merchandise return service (see [S923](#)).
- c. Certain mail sent by members of the Armed Forces (see [E030](#)).
- d. Certain matter by or for the blind or handicapped (see [E040](#)).
- e. Official mail (see [E050](#) and [E060](#)).
- f. Keys and identification devices returned to owners (see [E120](#) and [E130](#)).

Mail Without Postage

1.2

Matter of any class, including that for which special services are indicated, received at either the office of mailing or office of address without postage, is endorsed "Returned for Postage" and is returned to the sender without an attempt at delivery. If a mail recipient attempts to return or forward the mail without paying additional postage when required, the mail is endorsed "Returned for Postage" and returned to the recipient. If no return address is shown, or the delivery and return addresses are identical, or the delivery and return addresses are different but for the same person or organization, the piece is treated as dead mail.

Unpaid Metered Reply Mail

1.3

Metered reply mail on which the mailer failed to imprint a meter stamp is treated as business reply mail (BRM). Such mail is delivered on payment of postage and the applicable business reply per-piece charge for basic BRM.

Unpaid Matter for Private Delivery

1.4

If mailable matter without postage, intended for delivery by a private delivery company, is found in USPS collection boxes (or other receptacles for mail deposit), USPS facilities, or USPS mail processing operations, the company is contacted to pick up the matter by the close of the next workday. If the company does not pick up the matter, it is returned to the sender, postage due. If the sender cannot be identified or refuses the matter, it is treated as dead mail.

Shortpaid Mail—Basic Standards

1.5

Mail of any class, including mail indicating special services (except Express Mail, registered mail, and nonmachinable First-Class Mail), that is received at either the office of mailing or office of address without enough postage is marked to show the total (rounded off) deficiency of postage and fees. Individual such pieces (or quantities fewer than 10) are delivered to the addressee on payment of the charges marked on the mail. For quantity mailings of 10 or more pieces, the mailer is notified so that the postage charges may be adjusted before dispatch.

Shortpaid Express Mail

1.6

An insufficiently prepaid Express Mail shipment is never endorsed "Postage Due," and collection of deficient postage is never attempted from the addressee. For an Express Mail Next Day, Second Day, Military, or Same Day Airport Service item



received at the office of mailing without sufficient adhesive or meter stamps, the mailer is contacted to correct the deficiency before dispatch. If postage is paid by an Express Mail corporate account or federal government "Postage and Fees Paid" indicia, and the mailer writes an incorrect postage and/or fees amount, the account is debited for the correct amount. For a Custom Designed Service item received at the office of mailing with an incorrect weight listed, and if postage is paid with adhesive or meter stamps, the mailer is contacted to correct the deficiency before dispatch. If postage is paid by an Express Mail corporate account or federal government "Postage and Fees Paid" indicia, the account is debited for the correct amount.

Shortpaid Registered Mail
1.7

If shortpaid registered mail is found in ordinary mail, with only the First-Class rate of postage paid, the piece is delivered to the addressee as ordinary First-Class Mail. If the amount of postage and fees affixed indicates that the piece was intended to be registered, the piece is rated as postage due and forwarded to the addressee through the registered mail. If shortpaid registered mail is found in the registered mail, the piece is delivered without the collection of postage due. The additional postage is collected from the sender.

Shortpaid Nonmachinable Mail
1.8

Shortpaid nonmachinable First-Class Mail is returned to the sender for additional postage.

Undeliverable and Refused Shortpaid or Unpaid Pieces
1.9

Mail with insufficient postage that is refused by the addressee or otherwise undeliverable is:

- a. Returned to the sender with the reason for nondelivery "Returned for Additional Postage" if First-Class Mail with a return address. *The sender may affix the additional postage, cross out the reason for nondelivery, and remail the piece.*
- b. Returned to the sender and delivered when the sender pays the total deficient postage and additional postage for forwarding or return if other than First-Class Mail and with a return address.
- c. Treated as dead mail if it has no return address.

Original Postage
1.10

Postage stamps or meter stamps originally affixed to insufficiently prepaid mail are accepted in payment of postage to the amount of their face value when the mail is again presented for mailing.

Parcels Containing Written Matter
1.11

A parcel containing written matter and subject to postage due is charged:

- a. At the First-Class rate if the item consists mainly of First-Class matter.
- b. At the following rates if only a minor part of the contents is nonpermissible written matter:

Difference Between First-Class Rate and Rate Paid	Postage Due Charge
\$0.01 to 0.25	Full amount
0.26 to 1.00	\$0.25
1.01 or more	\$1.00

2.0 MAILABLE MATTER IN OR ON PRIVATE MAIL RECEPTACLES

Penalty
2.1

Whoever knowingly and willfully deposits any mailable matter (such as statements of account, circulars, sale bills, or other like matter) on which no postage is paid, in any letterbox established, approved, or accepted by the Postmaster General for the receipt or delivery of mail matter on any route, with intent to avoid payment of



lawful postage thereon, shall for each such offense be fined not more than \$300 (18 USC 1725).

- Liability for Postage**
2.2 Except for limited use by newspapers under [D041](#), any mailable matter not bearing postage found in, upon, attached to, supported by, or hung from private mail receptacles described in [D041](#) is subject to payment of the same postage if carried by mail.
- Partial Distribution**
2.3 If there is a distribution of pieces to some, but not all, addresses on a route, pieces are returned to the delivery unit for use in computing the postage due. First-Class Mail rates are applied to matter that would require First-Class Mail postage if mailed. For other matter, if the piece weighs less than 16 ounces, the applicable single-piece First-Class Mail or Priority Mail rate based on the weight of the piece is applied, or an applicable Package Services rate is applied, whichever is lower. If the piece weighs 16 ounces or more, the Package Services rate is applied.
- Full Distribution**
2.4 If there is a distribution of identical pieces to all or substantially all addresses on a route, only a representative number of pieces is returned to the delivery unit. Postage is computed as described in [2.3](#).
- Known Distributor**
2.5 If there is reason to believe that a private delivery firm or an individual within the post office delivery area is responsible for the delivery, the local postmaster notifies that party of the number of pieces and the postage due. If, within 5 days after notice, the firm or individual agrees to pay the postage due, payment is accepted and the pieces are delivered to the addressees. The party paying the postage may choose to redeliver the pieces rather than have the USPS deliver them. If the pieces are found to have been removed from receptacles improperly, they are delivered without postage charge.
- Unknown Distributor**
2.6 If the party responsible for delivery is not known or if the firm requested fails to pay the postage, the pieces are returned to the publisher or manufacturer, postage due and endorsed to show they were found in or on the addressee's mailbox without postage. If a publisher or manufacturer gives the name and telephone number of a person to contact and guarantees postage payment, the pieces are redelivered to the addressees. If the publisher or manufacturer is unknown or refuses the pieces, the matter is treated as dead mail.
- 3.0 COLLECTION OF POSTAGE DUE**
- Collected on Delivery**
3.1 Customers must pay in cash for postage-due mail before the mail is delivered. If postage-due collections equal about \$10 or more every 60 days, payment may be made by advance deposit of money in a postage due account. Postage on quantity mailings found in private mailboxes is subject to [1.5](#). Government agencies using penalty mail must pay postage due through an OMAS postage due account. Government agencies may no longer use penalty meter strips or penalty mail stamps to pay postage due.
- When Not Collected**
3.2 When the cancellation impression shows that a postage stamp (or stamps) was wholly or partly lost, the piece is handled as if correct postage had been paid for the class and weight of the piece absent any evidence to the contrary.
- Advance Deposit Account**
3.3 Mailers may choose to establish an advance deposit account(s) from which postage, per piece charges, and other fees are deducted. For certain special services, an advance deposit account is required. Mailers may use a single advance deposit account to pay postage due charges for more than one special

service (e.g., business reply mail, merchandise return service, and bulk parcel return service).

**Annual Accounting
Fee**
3.4

Except for accounts used solely to pay postage due for shortpaid mail, address correction notices, and undeliverable-as-addressed pieces returned to sender (e.g., return service requested), mailers must pay a separate annual accounting fee for each special service paid through an advance deposit account. This fee covers the administrative cost of maintaining the account and provides the mailer with the accounting of all charges deducted from that account. The accounting fee is charged once each 12-month period on the anniversary date of the initial accounting fee payment. The fee may be paid in advance only for the next year and only during the last 60 days of the current service period. The fee charged is that which is in effect on the date of payment.

4.0 REVENUE DEFICIENCY—GENERAL

Ruling
4.1

Revenue deficiency means a shortage or underpayment of postage or fees. Revenue deficiencies are generally assessed by the postmaster or manager, Business Mail Entry, who issues a written notification to the customer citing the amount of the deficiency and the circumstances.

Appeal of Ruling
4.2

[1-22-04] Except as provided under 5.0 and E670, a mailer may appeal a revenue deficiency assessment by sending a written appeal within 30 days of receipt of the notification to the appropriate postmaster or manager in 4.2a through 4.2c. In all cases, the mailer may be asked to give more information or documentation to support the appeal. Failure to do so within 30 days of the request is grounds for denying an appeal. Any decision that is not appealed as prescribed becomes the final agency decision. Mailers may send appeals as follows:

- a. To the district manager, Finance, for revenue deficiencies for fees. The district manager, Finance, issues the final USPS decision.
- b. To the postmaster or manager, Business Mail Entry, for revenue deficiencies for postage. The postmaster or manager, Business Mail Entry, forwards the appeal to the PCSC manager serving the entry post office. If the appeal concerns a ruling that mail, due to its contents, must be entered at First-Class Mail rather than Standard Mail rates, the PCSC will forward the appeal to the manager, Mailing Standards, USPS Headquarters who will issue the final agency decision. The PCSC will issue the final agency decision on all other appeals.
- c. To the manager, Mailing Standards (see G043 for address), if the PCSC manager first assessed the deficiency. The manager, Mailing Standards issues the final agency decision.



5.0 REVENUE DEFICIENCY—NONPROFIT STANDARD MAIL

Assessment and Appeal

5.1

A revenue deficiency may be assessed in the amount of the unpaid postage against any person or organization that mailed, or caused to be mailed, ineligible matter at the Nonprofit Standard Mail rates in violation of [E670](#). Nonprofit mailers have two levels of appeal. They may appeal revenue deficiency assessments as follows:

If the Initial Revenue Deficiency Assessment Was Made By:	First-Level Appeal	Second-Level Appeal and Final USPS Decision
Postmaster or manager, Business Mail Entry	PCSC	Manager, Mailing Standards
PCSC	Manager, Mailing Standards (see G043 for address)	Vice President, Pricing and Classification (see G043 for address)

All appeals must be submitted in writing within 30 days of the previous USPS decision. Any decision that is not appealed as prescribed becomes the final agency decision; no appeals are available within the USPS beyond the second appeal.

Collection

5.2

Any deficiency assessed under [5.1](#) that is found to be due and payable to the USPS in the final USPS decision must be paid promptly. If the USPS does not receive payment within 30 days, the USPS may deduct from the violator’s trust account or any other funds in USPS possession any deficiencies incurred within 12 months of the date of the final mailing on which the deficiency was assessed.

